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ABSTRACT

This study of a group of American teenagers living in Mexico uses a series of questionnaires to measure their degree of bilingualism (in English and Spanish) and biculturalism (in American and Mexican culture). The main hypotheses of this investigation were: (1) after five or more years in Mexico, the teenage subjects will be at least functionally bilingual and bicultural, but their competence and performance are expected to be inferior to that of their monolingual and monocultural counterparts in the United States and Mexico; and (2) the English language and American culture will be dominant over the Spanish language and Mexican culture because of reinforcement by family and school, and because of prestige factors involved. The study's methodology included design or research scheme, testing and control groups, field work, and analysis of data. The data was collected through a battery of questionnaires and tests designed to ascertain general background, language and a cultural background, linguistic cultural association, linguistic acceptability, and dialect distinction. Results supported both of the study's hypotheses. The actual questionnaires and tabular statistical results are included in the text. (EJS)

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Measurement of the Degree of Bilingualism and Biculturalism of American Teenagers Living in Mexico, 1977

by

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RELEVANCE TO EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

This study of a group of American teenagers living in Mexico uses a series of questionnaires to measure their degree of bilingualism (in English and Spanish) and biculturalism (in American and Mexican culture). The questions and the responses are relevant to any bilingual and bicultural setting. The measure of degrees of bilingualism and biculturalism has important implications to all teachers in bilingual situations and bilingual education programs.

Joel Sherzer, Co-Editor
Working Papers Series

MEASUREMENT OF THE DEGREE OF BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM OF AMERICAN TEENAGERS LIVING IN MEXICO, 1977*

I. INTRODUCTION

This study was undertaken as an independent research project while enrolled in the graduate degree program in Sociolinguistics at Georgetown University. The idea for the research scheme was conceived during the spring and summer of 1977, after review of material suggested by Fasold and Kenny, and jelled after considering several points Seeyle makes in his study on Biculturation of Americans in Guatemala. Field work was carried out in Mexico City and Querétaro during the fall semester of 1977.

A. Purpose of Research

It has long been of interest to social scientists to observe and try to understand mankind's ability to adapt. For the bicultural person, this means he must have the ability to perform the patterns of both cultures effectively and to recognize their meaning when performed by a native of either culture. This will be the working definition of "bicultural" for the purpose of this study, throughout which "bicultural" is considered to encompass "bilingual" as well, since the culture of a given society is most faithfully acquired through the corresponding native language. The opposite case is not necessarily true, given that language is not always culture-specific--one could be an English-Spanish bilingual without mastering Peruvian culture, for example.

This study attempts to quantify, through a battery of specially designed tests and questionnaires, the American teenager's performance as a

* The author is indebted to CIS-INAH (Centro de Investigaciones Superiores del Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia) for institutional support provided during the course of the study and is most grateful for the ideas generated during discussions with Dr. Michael Kenny and fellow team members presently researching "The Impact of the American Community in Mexico".

bicultural in the Mexican context and to offer suggestions as to what factors influence the degree of success they show in their efforts. The methodology followed was designed by the author and hopefully will prove to be a useful research tool for those institutions interested in discovering the American's capacity to adapt to a second culture without losing his own heritage and identity.

B. Topics of Interest

The particular topic of "Measurement of the Degree of Bilingualism and Biculturalism of American Teenagers Living in Mexico" was chosen because as a sociolinguist the phenomenon of language and culture maintenance of American youth abroad is of particular interest. As adolescents they represent a fairly homogeneous group with certain unique characteristics: the socialization process is at an advanced stage and their linguistic patterns are already well established; as students they are under the guidance of an institutionalized educational system; as teenagers, parental influence is gradually being replaced by peer influence, and the transition toward adulthood is marked by an awakening of independent attitudes and aspirations. Their linguistic and cultural preferences as offspring of American parents living abroad, or as expatriate second-generation Americans in many cases, will give an indication of the relative strength of two societies in contact, and their answers will undoubtedly reflect how deeply engrained their native culture is and to what degree another can be accommodated.

Even though this study concentrates on some of the more measurable aspects of language and culture, the following phenomena were also studied and will be reported on at a later date: which aspects of their native culture are retained and which are absorbed from the foreign culture; what factors accelerate or deter articulation, acculturation and integration into

the larger society; in the case of those who have spent more than half their life in Mexico, are they more Mexican or American?; are they equally fluent in both languages, and do they move with the same ease in different ethnic circles?; how much impact does education have on bilingualism and biculturalism?; is it stronger than family and/or environmental influence?; at a psycholinguistic level, what are the different degrees of bilingualism attributable to and how does this vary within families?

C. Hypotheses

The following two statements were the main working hypotheses of this investigation:

1. After at least five years in Mexico these teenage subjects will be at least functionally bilingual and bicultural, but their competence and performance are expected to be inferior to their monolingual and monocultural counterparts in the United States and Mexico.
2. The English language and American culture will be dominant over the Spanish language and Mexican culture because of reinforcement by family and schools, and of prestige factors involved.

II. METHODOLOGY

Considerable attention will be devoted to this chapter, since it offers a feasible approach that might be useful in future studies. The methodology followed belongs to the fields of sociolinguistics and cultural anthropology and in this study will be broken down into four different stages: A) Design of the Research Scheme, B) Testing of Control Groups, C) Field Work, and D) Analysis of Data.

A. Design of the Research Scheme

As was mentioned in the introduction, this project was conceived in mid-1977. The set of questionnaires in English was designed during the summer months at Georgetown, and the American control group was tested before returning to Mexico in late August. The set of questionnaires included the General Background Questionnaire, the Language and Culture Background Questionnaire, the Linguistic Cultural Association Test, the Language Acceptability Test, and a Dialect/Social Class Distinction Test (see Appendices for samples).

The purpose of the GBQ was to compile basic demographic data and parents' observations on the child's language and culture acquisition and language use within the home. The LCBQ was designed to detect language use and attitudes of the teenagers themselves in the first part, and attempted to explore degree of comfort and identification with both societies in the second half. As can be observed from the LCAT, these questions are not academic in nature, but are just ten of thousands of possible questions that could have been asked of the average American teenager. An effort was made to cover food, sports, holidays, TV, etc., which would not be restricted to a specific time span or geographical region in order to be fair to all subjects. The purpose of this questionnaire was simply to test familiarity with common American cultural concepts. The gestures relating to American culture were not written in so they could be elicited spontaneously. Those asked for were 1) a gesture for indifference, and 2) a gesture to replace saying goodbye. The LAT was designed to test competence in English by having the subject respond to the degree of correctness he as a native speaker of the language judged each sentence to have. The DSCDT exercise tested the subject's ability to

distinguish the most common English dialects[1] familiar to the average American teenager, to determine whether the speaker was educated or not[2] and to distinguish native speech from non-native English. The subject of Halloween was chosen for the free speech segment recorded because of the cultural overtones involved and because it was thought all speakers could easily talk on the subject with no previous experience.

The set of questionnaires in Spanish was not designed until the author returned to Mexico in late August, when it could be drawn up in consultation with native Mexicans. Equivalent tests were made up (not a translation of the English sections) and the Spanish dialects were recorded. The subject "El dia de los muertos" was selected for the free speech segment taping for exactly the same reasons Halloween was chosen for the English section, in addition to being the closest cultural equivalent. The gestures asked for were 1) show how a Mexican baby waves goodbye and 2) a motion for calling someone over from across the street. The differences that exist in paralinguistic features and how they vary from one language to another are significant, and the ability to properly perform these movements is a clear indication of acculturation.[3]

B. Testing of Control Groups

The three English language/American culture tests, together with the

1 "Dialect" is used in these tests in the sense of Gile's "accent" (1970), and with the exception of Black Vernacular English does not imply what is usually considered sub-standard variation of the standard code.

2 Labov (1966), Ellis (1967) and others have shown that speakers from different social strata are characterized by distinctive linguistic features that allow even the linguistically naive to accurately identify the social status of persons speaking different dialects.

3 The working definition of "acculturation" used in this paper is the accommodation or processes of change an individual undergoes when trying to learn a culture different from his own.

GBQ (the LCBQ did not form part of the battery of tests for the control groups since these subjects were all monolingual and monocultural), were applied to eight American teenagers from linguistically neutral zones (six were from Dover, Delaware, and two from Washington, D.C.) in August, 1977. These teenagers were sons or daughters of American-born, native English-speaking parents who had no foreign influence in the family and who had never lived abroad, nor had been exposed to a foreign language except in formal schooling. They covered the 13-19 year-old range and were all "average American teenagers" from the middle and upper middle classes, which were the classes it was assumed the American teenagers living in Mexico would fall into. The testing was done at private homes, in an informal atmosphere to simulate what true testing conditions were expected to be. The original research design contemplated the possibility that the author might misjudge the state of knowledge of American teenagers, so 12 questions were included, from which the best ten were selected.

The Mexican control group was selected by the same criteria. Just as was the case with the U.S. teenage group, the results of the Mexican control group have been taken to represent the state of knowledge of the average Mexican teenager regarding these questions.

C. Field Work

1. Sample Selection

Some difficulty was encountered in finding subjects who met the requirements to be considered an American teenager, i.e., a person in his or her teens, offspring of two American parents, and who had lived in Mexico at least five years for the purpose of this study. In part this was due to the fact that there were actually not as many youth who fulfilled these three requirements as was thought. Other complicating factors were 1) that in

spite of several good publications on the American community in Mexico, no one source contained all the information needed to determine eligibility, and 2) recent threats and kidnappings in the community made it necessary to work through social and educational networks as opposed to the more expedient direct contact option. Most of the sample (38 out of 53) came from the American School in Mexico City, simply because that is where those who met the requirements were concentrated, but ten other schools were included in an effort to gain some insight into the aspect of institutional education impact on bilingualism and biculturalism.

2. Estimate of the Population Universe

After checking lists available at the American School, only 150 teenagers met the eligibility requirements. Another 50 individuals were located at other English-speaking schools in the greater metropolitan area. If another 10% is added on (15 students) to cover isolated cases not learned of, the total number of eligible subjects in the Mexico City area would be some 215 individuals.

Without considerable expenditure of time and effort, it would have been impossible to obtain data for the rest of the country, but a very rough estimate was arrived at by the following empiric formula: Families living in the greater Mexico City metropolitan area comprise about 62% of the listings in the Anglo-American Directory. If these families have 215 teenagers who fit the research description, then the remaining 38% theoretically would contribute 85 teenagers to the sampling universe, which leads to a rough estimate of a total universe in Mexico of 310 American

teenagers. This study includes data from 53 individuals (30 families), which in turn constitutes approximately 17% of the possible candidates--a large enough sample to be representative of a cross-section. Following accepted statistical procedures, this 17% can be extrapolated to the population universe as a whole and it is possible to arrive at a reasonable statement of the degree of bilingualism and biculturalism of American teenagers living in Mexico in 1977.

3. Interview Procedure

Unless the parents were unavailable, permission was always requested of one of them to interview their children. With the exception of the teenagers from the John F. Kennedy School in Queretaro and one individual from the American School, the interview was always carried out in the student's home, usually in the presence of one of the parents from whom certain background information was obtained. The interviews conducted at a leisurely pace took 1-2 hours, depending on the number of teenagers in the family. The questionnaires and tests were done in the order previously mentioned and the subjects were allowed as much time as needed to answer and to ask for any clarification required. The interviews were delightful and afforded an excellent opportunity to see first-hand how typical American families live in Mexico and what their concerns are. Mere presence often made it possible to observe natural language use and family interaction, which provided a handy means of validating and complementing data from the more objective tests and questionnaires.

D. Analysis of Data

An abundance of information resulted from the 53 interviews, and all the data were analyzed manually. The methodology used for analysis was the following:

1. General Background Questionnaire (GBQ)

   This exercise provided demographic information on the subject and his or her family. While all the answers were categorized and tabulated, in this paper only those that were felt to directly impinge on the results will be commented on. These are: school attended, length of residence in Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries, language use at home, and ties maintained with the homeland. A brief profile of the American family with teenagers has been drawn up to summarize the remaining relevant information.

2. Language and Culture Background Questionnaire (LCBQ)

   Questions 1-9 and 18 were designed to determine language use and attitudes, while 10-20 (excepting 18) attempted to determine comfort and degree of identification with both societies. Analysis of the answers to the language part was straightforward, but the cultural tendencies were more difficult to handle and were tabulated as American-culture leaning, Mexican-culture leaning, or undefined. These observations have not been scored as such, but rather are intended to serve as an internal consistency (reliability) check on the objective scores and offer an explanation in many cases of the results obtained on the tests themselves.

3. Linguistic Cultural Association Test (LCAT) (both versions)

These questionnaires were graded in the following manner: five points were given for a right or suitable answer, three points for a less suitable but native answer, and 0 points for a wrong or non-suitable answer. Answer keys were made up beforehand based on the control groups' responses. New answers were consulted with other native speakers and were graded according to nativeness. For example, No. 5, "A man who plays records over the radio is known as a_____or a_____." The five-point answer was "disc jockey" or a "d.j."; answers such as "broadcaster", "radio announcer", "top 40 promoter", etc., received three points because they were considered native answers, while others such as "successful person" or "journalist" received a 0 because they showed no linguistic association with American culture. The same criterion was followed for Spanish, so that for a question such as No. 7, "Se pica jitomate, cebolla, chile y cilantro y se mezcla con aguacate para preparar una deliciosa salsa que se llama_____" five points were given for the correct answer "guacamole", three points for answers such as "salsa casera", "salsa picante", "pico de gallo", all of which are either too general or incorrect, but would only be answered as such by someone quite familiar with Mexican food. Answers such as "jugo", "salsa", etc., were graded as 0. An answer given in the other language was also graded as completely wrong. Gestures were either right (five points) or wrong (0 points). Tables with comparative results for the English and Spanish cultural questionnaires are given in the Findings and

Results Section. A score (60 possible points) was also totaled for each individual in order to correlate his performance in both languages wi-h other factors, but these results are the substance of another paper.

4. Linguistic Acceptability Test (LAT)

A similar scale of 5-3-0 was used to analyze these results. For example, question No. 7, "Would you mind telling me what time it is?" is a perfectly good sentence in English and should have been marked as a 1. If this was the case, the subject received five points; if the subject marked an X signifying that it sounded strange to him, he received three points because that was the next best answer. If he chose a 0, signifying that it was grammatically wrong, he got 0 points, because supposedly no native speaker of English would consider that sentence to be wrong. In Spanish the same criterion was applied, so that five points were given for an X in sentence No. 6, meaning that "Comí el desayuno a las 8" sounded strange, which is the case for Mexican Spanish, where it is much more common to say "Me desayuné a las 8" or perhaps "Tomé el desayuno a las 8"; three points were given for a 1, because even though it does not sound perfectly normal, it is a better answer than a 0, which indicates grammatical incorrectness, and this is not the case. Analyses were made at a macroscopic level for the group as a whole and at a microscopic or individual level for correlations with other factors. A perfect score was 50 points.

5. Dialect/Social Class Distinction Test (DSCDT)

In this case five points were given for a right answer and 0

points for a wrong answer with no intermediate scoring. A perfect score was 80 points and the results were graded at an individual and group level.

III. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

A. General Background Questionnaire (GBQ)

Even though all subjects were enrolled in some type of bilingual school, 83% claimed that nearly all of their classes were in English. The other 17% were enrolled in either the UNAM program (a heavily weighted academic course offered at the American School which, in addition to fulfilling requirements for higher education in the United States, also prepared the students to enter the National University of Mexico), or in Mexican bilingual schools where the medium of instruction was in Spanish.

Most of the subjects had lived in Mexico much longer than the minimum five-year requirement, which was set to avoid the initial stages of the acculturation cycle, i.e., enchantment followed by disillusion, and also allowed time for natural exposure to the cultural situations referred to in the questionnaires. The eight teenagers who scored 155 points or better had all been in Mexico for 11-16 years. Of the 53 subjects tested, 15 had been in other Latin American countries for 1-4 years and as a subgroup, performed better on the Spanish tests than the average subject did.

English was used exclusively by 17 of the 26 familiar interviewed (the other nine used both) and at least half of the families interviewed reported use of English phonology for first names even when referring to the children during a conversation in Spanish.

Regarding ties with the homeland, nearly all the families make yearly visits to the States or go even more frequently, and in return are visited by friends and relatives throughout the year. Other ties frequently mentioned were cable TV, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, book and record club membership, and membership in the local chapters of American culture clubs or associations.

B. Language and Cultural Background Questionnaire (LCBQ)

1. The information revealed by analysis of language use and related attitudes was not surprising but enlightening and provides us with first-hand data.

TABLE 1

ATTITUDINAL REFLECTIONS OF 53 AMERICAN TEENAGERS ON THEIR LANGUAGE USE IN MEXICO

	Eng./yes	Span./no	Both	Sometimes
Native language claimed	46	5	2	
Language used more often now	40	2	11	
Language expected to be more useful as an adult	39	2	12	
Feel comfortable using English in public places in Mexico?	32	13		8
Last book read for pleasure in	48	3	2	

TABLE 2

LANGUAGE USE BY SPECIFIC DOMAINS (Predominance)

	English	Spanish	Both
School	44	4	5
Home			
Family	50	0	3
Maids	1	51	1
Pets	34	6	10
Neighbors	5	32	16
Friends	12	9	32

TABLE 3

ASPECTS OF CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION

A.

	American	Mexican	Both/Other
Food preference	22	13	17
Music preference	48	1	4
Higher education plans[4]	48	3	2 (Europe)
Citizenship preference	42	9	2

B.

	Positive/Yes	Negative/No	Mixed
Image of Americans in Mexico	6	38	9
Do you feel foreign here?	14	27	12[5]

The answers to the question concerning the best qualities of Americans and Mexicans were too varied to be presented in a table, but an interesting trend was detected: more positive emotional qualities were attributed to the Mexican people, who were often described as "warm", "friendly", and "affectionate", while more cognitive ones were noted regarding Americans, such as "good thinkers", "orderly", "conscientious", and "law-abiding".

4 Scanlon (in press) reports that 53.5% of the 1974 graduating class at the American School plans to study in colleges in the United States. Most of these are probably the 48.8% of all-American seniors who composed the graduating class that year, which, if true, shows a high correlation with the results reported in Table 3.

5 Several subjects stated that they do not feel foreign at school and at home, where they spend most of their time, but that in other contexts they are often uncomfortable.

C. Linguistic Cultural Association Test (LCAT) English Version

These tests were graded as was explained in the Methodology Section.

TABLE 4

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC CULTURAL ASSOCIATION TEST FOR 53 SUBJECTS AND CONTROL GROUP

Question Number	5-points		3-points		0-points	
	S	CG	S	CG	S	CG
1	39	7	1	0	13	1
2	30	8	20	0	3	0
3	41	8	1	0	11	0
4	48	8	2	0	3	0
5	20	8	20	0	13	0
6	28	8	1	0	24	0
7	44	8	6	0	6	0
8	44	8	6	0	3	0
9	50	8	0	0	3	0
10	52	7	1	1	0	0
Gesture 1	41	8	0	0	12	0
Gesture 2	49	8	0	0	4	0
	486=	94=	55=	1=	95=	1=
	76%	98%	9%	1%	15%	1%

It is obvious that Question No. 6 caused the greatest difficulty by far, perhaps because nearly all of the subjects expressed a desire to go on to college and probably had not contemplated other possibilities, which was not the case with the control group. One person in the control group missed Question No. 1 and another partially erred on No. 10.

Spanish Version

TABLE 5

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC CULTURAL ASSOCIATION TEST FOR 53 SUBJECTS AND CONTROL GROUP

Question Number	5-points S	5-points CG	3-points S	3-points CG	0-points S	0-points CG
1	33	8	11	0	9	0
2	17	8	17	0	19	0
3	37	8	11	0	5	0
4	7	7	10	0	36	1
5	20	6	24	2	9	0
6	49	8	2	0	2	0
7	30	8	12	0	11	0
8	18	8	3	0	32	0
9	29	7	16	1	8	0
10	29	8	5	0	19	0
Gesture 1	25	7	0	0	28	1
Gesture 2	28	8	0	0	15	0
	332=	91=	111=	3=	193-	2=
	52%	95%	17%	3%	31%	2%

In Spanish Questions 4, 8 and Gesture 1 were the most problematic. Sometimes the subjects knew No. 4 in English only, in spite of the fact that at present the illegal entry of migrant workers into the U.S. is one of the major thorns in U.S.-Mexican relations. No. 8 is a very famous expression by Juárez which you know by heart or do not know at all. One of the Mexican control group missed No. 4 and no one missed No. 8, but they partially erred on No. 5 and 9, where the third accompanying ingredient with sal y limón varied according to taste.

D. Linguistic Acceptability Test (LAT) English Version

This test was also graded on a 5-3-0 basis and the results are found below.

TABLE 6

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC ACCEPTABILITY TEST FOR 53 SUBJECTS AND CONTROL GROUP

Question Number	5-points		3-points		0-points	
	S	CG	S	CG	S	CG
1	28	8	23	0	2	0
2	36	6	8	1	9	1
3	32	6	3	0	18	2
4	41	8	3	0	9	0
5	26	6	2	0	25	2
6	53	8	0	0	0	0
7	52	8	0	0	1	0
8	21	7	28	1	4	0
9	49	8	4	0	0	0
10	47	8	4	0	2	0
	385=	73=	75=	2-	70=	5=
	73%	91%	14%	3%	13%	6%

Great difficulties were encountered with Questions Nos. 3 and 5, which was also true of the control group, where two people missed both questions, as opposed to one or none missing the others. As can be seen from Table 4, the ones least missed were not missed by any of the control group.

Spanish Version

TABLE 7

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC ACCEPTABILITY TEST
FOR 53 SUBJECTS AND CONTROL GROUP

Question Number	5-points		3-points		0-points	
	S	CG	S	CG	S	CG
1	7	8	46	0	0	0
2	19	7	4	1	30	0
3	34	7	17	1	12	0
4	35	8	18	0	0	0
5	34	7	10	0	9	1
6	13	8	37	0	3	0
7	44	7	7	1	2	0
8	37	7	6	1	19	0
9	37	8	12	0	4	0
10	38	8	1	0	14	0
	299=	75=	158=	4=	84=	1=
	55%	94%	29%	5%	16%	1%

No. 2 was the question most missed, but was only partially missed by one person from the control group. Apparently the American teenagers were guided by the lack of determiner/noun gender agreement, without taking into due account usage in Mexico. The same type of mistake was made in No. 1, where the Mexican control group immediately marked it as sounding strange, but it went unnoticed by the Americans. A similar phenomenon occurred in No. 6. None of the control group missed these questions.

E. Dialect Distinction Test (DDT) English Version

In this case the subjects were either right or wrong.

TABLE 8

RESULTS OF DIALECT DISTINCTION TEST
FOR 53 SUBJECTS AND CONTROL GROUP

Speaker Number	5-points S	5-points CG	0-points S	0-points CG
1	41	8	12	0
2	52	7	1	11
3	44	8	9	0
4	43	8	10	0
5	33	7	20	1
6	45	8	8	0
7	52	8	1	0
8	52	8	1	0
	362=	62=	62=	2=
	85%	97%	15%	3%

Speaker No. 5 was the hardest to distinguish of the regional accents and granted, it was the least well-defined. One of the control group missed this speaker and one other control subject missed speaker No. 2. Although the American teenage group living in Mexico scored much lower than their U.S. counterparts, only one foreign-residing teenager missed speakers Nos. 2, 7 and 8, who were non-native, non-native and British respectively. These were precisely the accents which were most easily distinguishable as non-American.

Spanish Version

TABLE 9

RESULTS OF DIALECT DISTINCTION TEST
FOR 53 SUBJECTS AND CONTROL GROUP

Speaker Number	5-points		0-points	
	S	CG	S	CG
1	39	8	14	0
2	29	8	14	0
3	43	7	10	1
4	11	7	42	1
5	19	6	34	2
6	52	8	1	0
7	27	8	26	0
8	15	8	38	0
	245=	60=	179=	4=
	58%	94%	42%	6%

Speakers Nos. 4, 5 and 8 caused the greatest problems. The control group only had difficulties with speaker No. 5, which can perhaps be attributed to the fact that the accent was not strong enough. The American teenagers in Mexico obviously did not score as well as native U.S. speakers, but were able to distinguish the two non-native speakers (Nos. 3 and 6) quite successfully and the Spanish (from Spain) accent, just as they were able to distinguish the British accent from the regional American ones.

TABLE 10

RESULTS OF SOCIAL CLASS DISTINCTION IN ENGLISH FOR 53 SUBJECTS

Speaker Number	5-points	0-points
1	23	30
2	45	8
3	41	12
4	44	9
5	44	9
6	24	29
7	22	31
8	52	1
	295=	129=
	70%	30%

These results cannot be compared with those of the control group because unfortunately this part was not included in the control group test. The social class of speakers Nos. 1, 6 and 7 was greatly confused, but there is a plausible explanation in each case. Speaker No. 1 was definitely not lower class, but he spoke for the shortest time and of disguising himself as a flower sack, a pumpkin, and a goblin, while most others offered a deeper explanation of Halloween. Quite possibly this was taken as a lack of general knowledge or education. Speaker No. 6 was an uneducated Black. While they had little trouble distinguishing his dialect as Black Vernacular, they did not seem to be aware of the social stigma usually attached to certain Black speech markers, undoubtedly due to a lack of exposure to this phenomenon. As a matter of curiosity, a sub-sample was taken of those who had spent at least five years in the U.S. (18 subjects), and a different result was obtained. Of the 18 subjects, 12 classified speaker No. 6 as belonging to the lower class and 6 as

belonging to the middle class, which would tend to confirm that one must live in a society to be aware of this type of social stigma. Speaker No. 7 was non-native, with a deficient command of English, which undoubtedly led the subjects to mistake this for a lack of education.

TABLE 11

RESULTS OF SOCIAL CLASS DISTINCTION TEST IN SPANISH FOR 53 SUBJECTS AND CONTROL GROUP

Speaker Number	5-points		0-points	
	S	CG	S	CG
1	53	8	0	0
2	50	8	3	0
3	39	7	14	1
4	51	6	2	2
5	46	7	7	1
6	49	8	4	0
7	35	8	18	0
8	40	8	13	0
	363=	60=	61=	4=
	86%	94%	14%	6%

These results are particularly interesting because it is the only part on which American teenagers living in Mexico performed better in Spanish than in English although they did not quite meet the control group standards. Various speculations could be made here. One is that most of them have spent their formative years in Mexico, as well as their teen years and have obviously paid attention to the social aspects of language. Another is that there are several markers in Mexican Spanish that do cut across regional boundaries and are quite pronounced in uneducated speech--perhaps they were simply more obvious in this sample.

IV. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The following table gives a comprehensive review of the individual objective tests previously analyzed and the relative performance in English and in Spanish of American teenagers living in Mexico.

TABLE 12

COMPREHENSIVE SCORING IN PERCENTAGES OF TEST RESULTS ON BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM OF AMERICAN TEENAGERS LIVING IN MEXICO WITH CONTROL GROUP PERFORMANCE

	Linguistic/Cultural			Linguistic Accept.			Dialect Dist.		Social Class	
	5pts	3pts	0pts	5pts	3pts	0pts	5pts	0pts	5pts	0pts
American Teens in Mexico										
English	76%	9%	15%	73%	14%	13%	85%	15%	70%	30%
Spanish	52%	17%	31%	55%	29%	16%	58%	42%	86%	14%
Control Group										
English	98%	1%	1%	91%	3%	6%	97%	3%	*	
Control Group										
Spanish	95%	3%	2%	94%	5%	1%	14%	6%	94%	6%

*Determination of social class was not asked of the control group in English.

By examining the comparative results in the Language/Culture column, it is easy to observe that American teenagers living in Mexico did not perform as well as the control group in the United States (76% vs. 98%). Their inability to handle these associations with the same ease is to be expected since many of the subjects tested have only been exposed to U.S. culture second-hand or for brief periods. On the Spanish/Mexican culture part they scored correct answers only 52% of the time, versus 95% by the Mexican control group for the same test, indicating less familiarity with Mexican culture than with U.S. culture by a fairly wide range (about 25%).

For the Linguistic Acceptability Test the same pattern holds true. In the English part, American teenagers residing in Mexico performed at a level inferior to Stateside teenagers (75% vs. 91%), once again doing about 75% as well. In Spanish the overall results were similar to the previous test (55% vs. 94% control group) percentagewise. Assuming these results are good indicators of their receptive competence, these subjects are more native in English than in Spanish.

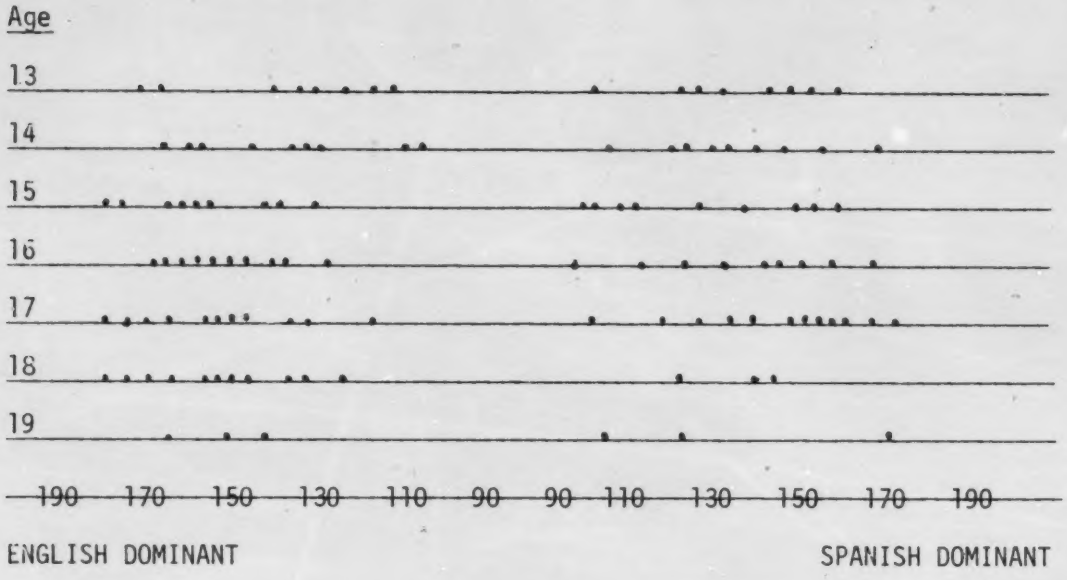
The teenagers did best on the dialect distinction tests, scoring 85% for English dialects vs. 97% for the control group, and 58% in Spanish versus 94% for the control group. This superiority in English dialects can most likely be attributed to 1) the constant influx of Americans from all parts of the country to Mexico and contact with them at school and community events; 2) cable TX, and 3) frequent visits to different parts of the United States. Their performance in Spanish held constant in the 50 percentile, as was the case for the two previous tests. In this particular case their inability to distinguish regional accents is most likely due to little contact with people outside the Mexico City area and to the fact that Mexican radio and TV programs are not popular with American teenagers in general.

As was mentioned in the previous table, social class distinction in Spanish was the easiest task, probably because of exposure to uneducated speech through domestic help at home, maintenance workers at school and "street talk".

These American teenagers residing in Mexico are shown to be English-dominant biculturals. Of a possible 190 points total in each language/culture combination, the highest number of points attained on the English/American culture part was 174 and the lowest 121; in Spanish/Mexican culture the points earned ranged from a high of 170 to a low of 88. Most ranged between 130-170 in English, but were more scattered in Spanish, varying from 90-160.

Graph No. 1

GROUPING OF SUBJECTS ON A SCALE OF BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM



While the battery of tests applied did not cover all aspects that one would want to include in a complete profile of a bilingual/bicultural person[6], the results of the tests used do bear out Hypothesis No. 1 stated on page 3, namely that American teenagers living in Mexico are functionally bilingual and bicultural (a minimum of 52% was scored on the tests), but reflect a lower level of competence and performance than their monolingual and monocultural counterparts in the United States and Mexico.

Hypothesis No. 2, which states that "The English language and American culture will be dominant over the Spanish language and Mexican culture because of reinforcement by family and schools and due to prestige factors involved" has also been borne out. Evidence of the first part of the affirmation can be found in Table 12. If we consider that the average teenager spends most of his time at school or participating in school-related activities and

[6]Oral comprehension and fluency were not included in this particular study, for example.

at home, the information on domains of language use found in Table 2 would help to explain why the results of this study showed them to be English-dominant. "Prestige factors" can be picked up through the attitudinal and cultural identification information contained in Tables 1 and 3 and is compounded by the advantageous position the United States holds as a leading world economic and political power over Mexico. This prestigious position is associated with language and culture as well.

The results of this study are intriguing for the researcher. Would similar results be found if an active language component were added to the research design? What types of interference would be encountered and how might this be related to length of residence, language preference, family influence and other factors? Would additional instruction in Spanish and Mexican culture strengthen language ability or is schooling secondary to a desire to become more acculturated or remain less so? Lastly, how would these results vary if the same questionnaires and tests were applied to the teenage offspring of mixed marriages living in Mexico--would the substitution of one parent be enough to swing the teenagers to the Spanish/Mexican culture dominant side of the scale? Hopefully there will be an opportunity to study these and other important questions in the near future.

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GENERAL BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

(refers to child but to be administered by researcher to parent)

Part A

1. Name:_____

2. Age:_____

3. Schooling:

   Last grade completed:_____

   Name of School:_____

   Foreign languages studied other than English and Spanish:_____

   No. of years studied:_____

   Other languages spoken:_____

   Contacts with other languages:_____

4. Residence:

   Have you lived anywhere except Mexico? If so, where and how long?_____

_____

   Where else have you lived in the Mexican Republic and how long?_____

_____

   How long have you lived in Mexico, D.F.?_____

5. Family Background:

   How many brothers and sisters are there in the family and what is their age?

_____

   Where did your parents grow up?
   Mother:_____
   Father:_____

   Last educational level completed:
   Mother:_____
   Father:_____

   Present occupation:
   Mother:_____
   Father:_____

Do you have any non-native American speakers in your family? If so, what relation are they to you and how much contact have you had with them?

_____

Special observations on child's culture and language acquisition:

_____

_____

Part B (refers to parents, to be answered by parent, administered by researcher)

1. How fluent are you and your spouse in Spanish?_____

_____

2. Wben is Spanish used in the home and when is English used?_____

_____

3. How do you pronounce your childrens' names? Does this pronunciation ever vary?_____

4. What were your reasons for coming to Mexico?_____

_____

5. What ties do you maintain with your homeland?_____

_____

Name of Parent:_____

Address:_____

Phone:_____

Observaciones by Researcher:

LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

(to be answered by child, administered by researcher)

1. What's your native language?_____

2. Do people take you for a native speaker of that language?_____

3. Which language do you use more now?_____

4. Which language do you think will be more useful to you as an adult?_____

5. At school what percentage of your classes are in English and what percentage in Spanish?_____

6. Are all your teachers native speakers of the language they teach in?_____

7. Are most of your classmates native Americans or native Mexicans?_____

8. What language do you use with:

   a. parents_____ d. pets_____

   b. relatives_____ e. friends_____

   c. maids_____ f. neighbors_____

9. Do you feel comfortable using English in public places?_____

10. If you were to give a party for your friends, what type of a party would it be and who would you invite to it?_____

_____

11. What are your favorite foods?_____

12. Your favorite music?_____

13. Other than your family, what other contacts do you have with U.S. culture?

_____

14. How much time have you spent in the U.S. and when were you last there?_____

_____

15. What do you think is the image of Americans in Mexico?_____

_____

16. Do you feel foreign here?_____

17. Where do you plan to do your higher education?_____

18. What is the last book you read for pleasure in English and in Spanish?____

_____

19. What do you like most about American people and Mexican people?_____

_____

20. If you had to choose right now, would you prefer American or Mexican citizenship and why?_____

LINGUISTIC CULTURAL ASSOCIATION TEST (ENGLISH VERSION)

(to be filled in by subject)

Instructions: Please fill in the blank with a suitable answer.

1. A typical cheer at a sports event is_____

2. At the supermarket you might want to buy a_____of lettuce and a _____of radishes.

3. A "whiz kid" is somebody who is really_____.

4. To avoid calling a friend by a long, proper name you would call him or her by his or her_____.

5. A man or woman who plays records over the radio is known as a_____ _____or a_____

6. After high school, instead of deciding to go to a 4-year college or university, you might choose to go to a_____.

7. A famous television program is "I Love_____".

8. At Easter it's common for parents to organize an_____ for their small children.

9. A very popular childhood game (not team sports) is_____.

10. What are two foods that you particularly associate with Thanksgiving besides turkey?_____.

Gestures: (Wait for instructions)

Name:_____

LINGUISTIC ACCEPTABILITY TEST (ENGLISH VERSION)

(to be filled in by subject)

Instructions: Please put a (1) in the blank if the sentence sounds O.K. to you, an (X) if it sounds strange or weird, and an (0) if you think it is wrong grammatically. Go by your first impression.

1. The boy started down the hill and suddenly got a headache. _____
2. John doesn't realize that his hair is on fire and neither do I. _____
3. It's warmer in Chicago than it is in the evening. _____
4. Mary didn't say nothing to her teacher when she left the room. _____
5. Susan caused Victor to become not alive. _____
6. Peter told Harry to take his umbrella in case it rained. _____
7. Would you mind telling me what time it is? _____
8. I request that you tell me why your mother went downtown. _____
9. I decided it would be a good idea to paint my house. _____
10. There's a man going down the road sells fresh corn. _____

Name: _____

DIALECT DISTINCTION TEST (ENGLISH VERSION)

(to be filled in by subject:

Instructions: You will hear 8 speakers with 6 different accepts talk briefly on the subject of Halloween. Please place the letter that best fits the description of the speaker's accent in the blank, and then a plus (+) or a minus (-) according to the impression the speaker gives you.

a - not a native speaker of English

b - standard American (no particular accent)

c - New York accent

d - Southern accent

e - Black accent

f - British accent

(+) - probably middle or upper class and has at least finished high school

(-) - probably low class and has only finished elementary school

Speaker No. 1 _____ _____

Speaker No. 2 _____ _____

Speaker No. 3 _____ _____

Speaker No. 4 _____ _____

Speaker No. 5 _____ _____

Speaker No. 6 _____ _____

Speaker No. 7 _____ _____

Speaker No. 8 _____ _____

Name: _____

PRUEBA DE ASOCIACION LINGUISTICA-CULTURAL (VERSION CASTELLANA)

(a ser llenada por el sujeto)

Instrucciones: Complete las rayas con la respuesta que tú creas más correcta.

1. La porra más típica de México es_____.
2. El Día de los Reyes se parte_____.
3. El 15 de septiembre, a las 11 de la noche,_____.
4. Los trabajadores ilegales mexicanos en los Estados Unidos son conocidos como_____.
5. El tequila se toma acompañado de_____,_____, y_____.
6. El día de tu_____y de tu cumpleaños te cantan_____.
7. Se pica jitomate, cebolla, child y cilantro y se mezcla con aguacate para preparar una deliciosa salsa que lleva el nombre de_____.
8. El respeto al derecho ajeno_____.
9. _____es al más famoso cómico mexicano.
10. Raúl Velasco es el conductor en televisión del programa_____.

Gestos: (espera instrucciones)

Nombre:_____

PRUEBA DE ACEPTABILIDAD LINGUISTICS (VERSON CASTELLANA)

(a ser llenada por el sujeto)

Instrucciones: Si te suena normal, pon un (1) en el espacio; si te suena raro, pon una (X); y si te suena como un error gramatical, pon un (0). Guíate por tu primera impresion.

1. Tres tostones equivalen a un peso y medio. _____

2. El juez solicitó la declaración de la testigo. _____

3. El es mayor que ella, pero yó soy más mayor que los dos. _____

4. Las competencias en bibicleta se llevarán a cabo en el velódromo. _____

5. Ya sé quien eres, te he estado observándote. _____

6. Comí el desayuno a las 8. _____

7. No me digas que no, porque no te creo. _____

8. Si tuviera dinero compraré un coche. _____

9. Me dió un calambre en la cabeza. _____

10. Este libro fue escribido por un autor muy famoso. _____

Nombre: _____

PRUEBA DE DISTINCION DIALECTAL (VERSION CASTELLANA)

(a ser llenada por el sujeto)

Instrucciones: Van a escuchar a 8 personas con 6 acentos diferentes hablar brevemente sobre el tema del Día de los Muertos en México. Favor de colocar en el espacio la letra que mejor corresponda a la descripción del acento de cada orador y después un (+) o un (-) según la impresión que te dan.

a - su lengua materna no es el español

b - es de México, D.F.

c - es del norte de México

e - es de Veracruz

e - es de Yucatán

f - es español

(+) - probablemente pertenece a la clase media o alta y ha terminado la secundaria por lo menos

(-) - probablemente pertenece a la clase baja y ni siquiera ha terminado la primaria

Orador No. 1 _____ _____

Orador No. 2 _____ _____

Orador No. 3 _____ _____

Orador No. 4 _____ _____

Orador No. 5 _____ _____

Orador No. 6 _____ _____

Orador No. 7 _____ _____

Orador No. 8 _____ _____

Nombre: _____